

Remarks

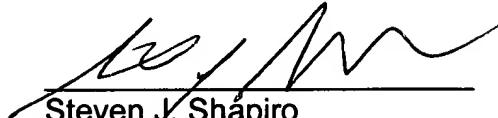
The instant amendment is being filed concurrently with a Brief on Appeal to correct a minor informality in the dependency of claims 14-24. Claims 13-24 were added in the last amendment. It was intended that claims 14-23 should all ultimately depend from independent claim 13. However, a clerical error was made such that the claims 14-23 ultimately all depend from claim 1. The Examiner is advised that the specific recitations in claims 14-24 correspondingly match the recitations in claims 2-11. Moreover, independent claim 24 is the same as claim 12 except that it should refer to claim 13 instead of claim 1.

In view of the above, it is clear that the instant amendment does not touch the merits of the application and places the claims in better form for appeal. Since the Examiner has already searched, examined, and rejected the specific limitations set forth in claims 14-24, the instant amendment requires no additional search or examination time by the Examiner as the current rejections set forth by the Examiner would still be applicable to the amended claims (although not considered appropriate by the applicants as set forth in the corresponding Brief on Appeal).

Applicants respectfully request that the instant amendment be entered by the Examiner in order to place the claims in better form for appeal. Further, since the amendment does not touch the merits of the application, a denial of entry of the instant amendment would cause the Applicants to incur unnecessary expenses and

would defeat the United States Patent and Trademark Office's goal of expedited prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven J. Shapiro', is written over a horizontal line.

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